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ABSTRACT

This paper contains a variety of instructional strategies and a review of research related to different learning styles. A learning styles inventory, style profiles, and information regarding some types of activities for students with different learning styles are included. Two sample lesson plans introduce and describe the inductive learning strategy technique. A description of the Readers Theater strategy with accompanying illustrations also is included. The lessons are designed for grade 7 but could be modified for other grade levels and curricular areas. (EH)

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ED 381 459

COMMUNICATING WITH MIDDLE CHILDHOOD STUDENTS OF VARIED LEARNING STYLES: SOCIAL STUDIES AND LANGUAGE ARTS-RELATED STRATEGIES THAT WORK*

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Introduction

This handout has been prepared to support our presentation which was organized around the following objectives:

1. To familiarize teachers with one procedure for identifying learning style profiles to middle childhood social studies instruction.

2. To present two approaches which address learning style differences (inductive learning and Readers Theater).

3. To engage participants in creative and critical thinking activities designed to motivate them to try such instruction in their own classrooms.

4. To share with participants sample lessons developed by teachers which utilize inductive learning and Readers Theater approaches.

This handout contains the following:

1. A description of the learning styles inventory, style profiles and information regarding some types of activities preferred by persons with different learning styles. (pp. 3-4)

2. An introduction and description of the inductive learning strategy utilized in this presentation along with two sample lesson plans which incorporate use of this strategy. (pp.5-11)

3. A description of the Readers Theater strategy with accompanying illustrations. (pp. 12-15).

LEARNING STYLES
(Introduction)

The Learning Styles Profile inventories described and illustrated in this presentation are based upon the work of Carl Gustav Jung. The inventories (adult and child) were developed by Harvey F. Silver and J. Robert Hanson.1

This instrument is based upon the theory that people collect information either primarily by "sensing" or "intuiting". They also make judgments either through "thinking" or "feeling". Most people fall primarily within one of the following categories:

SENSING FEELING (S-F)- This person is characterized as sociable, friendly and interpersonally oriented; sensitive to feelings; has a personal orientation to learning; work best when emotionally connected and involved; enjoys working with others.

SENSING THINKING (S-T)- This person is characterized as realistic, practical, results oriented; is particularly effective in tasks which are pragmatic, logical, useful; organized and efficient; likes clear step-by-step directions.

INTUITIVE THINKING (N-T)- This person is characterized as theoretical, intellectually curious and knowledge oriented; likes complex problems; idea oriented; like bringing structure and organization to people and problems; works well independently or with other thinking types.

INTUITIVE FEELING (N-F) This person is characterized as curious, imaginative and creative; likes to think of novel ways of identifying and finding problem solutions; is eager to explore ideas; sometimes unpredictable group member; motivated by own interests; does not fear to be different.

1 The TLC Learning Inventory, Hanson, Silver, Strong and Associates, Inc. 101 Cedar Lane, Teaneck, N.J. 07666 (201) 652-3353

LEARNING STYLES

SOME PREFERRED ACTIVITIES FOR FOUR STYLES

SENSING FEELERS

personal journals
role playing
*team activities
*group projects
*consensus decision making
interviews
*presenting

SENSING THINKERS

*following directions
*collecting facts
worksheets
*copying
*record keeping
*listing things
repetitive activities
(drill, games)

INTUITIVE THINKERS

*games requiring strategic thinking

*interpreting data
*goal setting
*mysteries
*using inquiry methods
designing an experiment
independent research

INTUITIVE FEELERS

*solving old problems in new ways
*creative arts activities
*designing
*generating alternatives
dramatic arts
guided imagery
dramatic arts
open-ended discussions

*activities connected to inductive learning and readers theater strategies described and illustrated on the remaining pages of this handout

INDUCTIVE LEARNING

"IF YOU WANT STUDENTS TO THINK DIFFERENTLY, YOU NEED TO TEACH DIFFERENTLY." Hilda Taba

The inductive learning strategy used here is based upon the work of Hilda Taba's model involving concept formation, interpretation of data and application of principles. The lessons are modeled after those developed and described in Strong, Richard et. al. Cosmic Connections. Hanson, Silver and Strong Associates, Inc. Teaneck, N.J., 1990. 98 pages.

Inductive learning is a natural process in which people observe phenomena, compare and contrast attributes, group and label phenomena and form generalizations. Thinking inductively is how we naturally make sense of our world.

The principles of inductive learning are based upon research which indicates that a person must first connect unknown information to something already known in order to make sense of it. The process involves taking students through the processes of

1. Making active connections between what they know and what we want them to know

2. Making sense of information by grouping or categorizing new information into meaningful relationships

3. Finding meaningful labels to put on new "grouped" information

4. "Natural" learning (inductive) leads the learner to make predictions (often through questions) about incomplete information leading, ideally, to formation of accurate conceptual understanding

Inductive Learning Activity

Focus: Seventh Grade Social Studies (Latin America)

QCC(tie)
(1) Formulates ideas related to regions and cultures.
(2) Organizes information related to regions and culture
(3) Works within a group to complete an assigned task

Lesson Objective: Students will perceive logical relationships when presented with key vocabulary on the topic of Cuba

Business
(1) Have 5-6 decks of vocabulary words on Cuba
(2) Arrange room for group work
(3) Have 5-6 copies (one for each group) of "student worksheet"

Procedures

Opener: Create interest in new unit. (example) "Today we are going to begin study of a country whose leader once tried out for major league baseball in the USA. He is a doctor. He has a Ph.D. Can you name him and/or the country he heads?"

1. Create 5-6 groups. Assign group roles as necessary.

2. Tell groups they are to organize the words in some way. They are to put words which are related together. Ask them to try to create 5-7 categories. Give then 20 minutes.

3. After groups have organized words, distribute worksheet. Ask students to put down words which describe their categories. (They can have words left over, sort of a miscellaneous category) Give them 10 minutes to write down their categories and the words which fit appropriate category.

4. Ask groups to share some of their lists

5. Share your example (Transparency)

6. Closures Tell s's that topic they're identified will be basis for the way class studies Cuba.

Assessment

1. Formative: Collect & evaluate group efforts. Give feedback on how logical their organization is. Evaluate on basis of total group effort.

2. Summative: On unit test or as part of portfolio, repeat assignment and ask s's to individually organize based upon what they've learned during unit study.

Cuba Study
(Inductive Learning)

Words to categorize

Africans
baseball
"Bay of Pigs"
Baptisa
Caribbean
Chinese
Castro
colony
Ciboney and Taino "Indians"
Columbus discovery
communism
Catholic
dictatorship
flan
Guantanemo
Havana
hurricanes
immigrants
John F. Kennedy
Khrushchev
Marti
nation
puppet government
pirates
revolutions
rhumba
sugar cane
slavery
Spanish
tropical

INDUCTIVE LEARNING ACTIVITY
(Teacher Transparency)

One Example of Categories and Items:

Leader
Category

Items

1 Baptista
2 Castro
3 Kennedy
4 Khrushchev
5 Marti

Location/Climate
Category

Items

1 Caribbean
2 Guantanemo
3 Havana
4 hurricanes
5 tropical

Cultural
Category

Items

1 baseball
2 Catholic
3 flan
4 rhumba
5 sugar cane

Historical
Category

Items

1 "Bay of Pigs"
2 Columbus discovery
3 pirates
4 revolutions
5 slavery

Ethnic Groups
Category

Items

1 Africans
2 Chinese
3 Ciboney/Taino "Indians"
4 immigrants
5 Spanish

Political
Category

Items

1 colony
2 communism
3 dictatorship
4 nation
5 "puppet government"

LESSON PLAN

Topic: South Asia

Grade Level: 7th Grade

Objective:

TLW identify major countries and cities of South Asia

TLW identify the major aspects of the climate of South Asia.

TLW identify the natural resources of South Asia.

TLW recognize different agriculture and manufacturing products and equipment of South Asia.

Business:

Discuss working in groups

Hand out papers

Materials:

Overhead

Note cards

Visual organizer

Textbook

Lesson Opener

(Hook) Imagine you are going to move to another country. Since you are going to be moving out of the country you will need to know something about the country in which you are moving. What are some things you would like to know that will help you live there?

Discuss with the groups that you are in, what things you would need to know.

Things may include:

population, climate, natural resources, agriculture, and where the country is with respect to the rest of the world.

(Bridge) Now that we have talked about some of the things we may look for in a country, we are going to try and relate some of the very same things to a region of the world. Today we are going to talk and explore South Asia.

Lesson Procedures:

I will pass out maps of the world to show where South Asia is with respect to the rest of the world. I will show where South Asia is on the World Map. I will point out some key things about its location, size, and vitality. I will ask students to color in the countries that I point to on the map. The students will also show everyone where places are on the map using the overhead.

Since the class is already in groups, I will hand out the note cards with the key points of South Asia. I will instruct the class to work together and come up with categories and headings for groups of words for South Asia. I will walk around and manage the groups to make sure they are on task.

After the class gets to a point of satisfaction I will hand out my visual organizer and we will go over it as a whole class.

Closure:

As the groups finish their work each group will walk around and see what other groups labeled their categories. We will also talk about and discuss our findings. When the class finishes our review, I will ask the class to write one or two sentences about what they have learned. I will also ask them to tell me what they like or disliked about the class.

Lesson Evaluation:

Evaluation is based on participation during the class discussion and group work. Discussion is on the objective.

Evaluation is based on the completion and accuracy of the visual organizer that we discuss as a whole class. Visual organizer is set up to reflect objectives.

Listed below are words that you would see or hear in South Asia. Group any words that have some features in common. Decide what the words in each have in common and use this common characteristic as a label.

cotton	bauxite	Pakistan	desert	temperate	
iron ore	Bangladesh	tea	rice	natural gas	
coal	chromite	Nepal	tropical	wheat	millet
fishing	monsoons	manganese	oil	rubber	
jute	peanuts	mica	forests	tropical	India
Bhutan	uranium	livestock	manufacturing center		
sugar cane	sorghum	Sri Lanka	Indian Ocean		
Himalayan Mountains	Deccan Plateau				
Eastern Ghats	Western Ghats	Arabian Sea			

WHAT IS READERS THEATRE?

Readers Theatre is an interpretive reading activity for all students in the classroom. Readers can make content come alive through characters using their own voices and gestures.

Value: Readers Theatre expands students' language through reading as they select and present a scene and through writing as they prepare scripts.

1. Readers Theatre motivates reluctant students to become involved in the lesson.

2. Readers Theatre forces students to immerse themselves in the content as they reread for accuracy. Students, therefore, become critical readers.

3. Readers Theatre deepens the meaning of text for students as they make the language their own.

4. Readers Theatre is a fast process because no memorization is required.

5. Students take an active part in decision-making.

6. Students develop good listening habits as they interact in small groups, as they perform, and as they listen to performers.

7. Students develop oral skills. They strive for voice flexibility, good articulation, proper pronunciation, and projection.

8. Readers Theatre gives the students practice in creative writing skills as they add or recreate lines from text.

9. Students develop personal and social growth as they gain confidence, poise, and a sense of teamwork, as they work together toward shared goals.

OVERALL, READERS THEATRE IS AN EXCITING WAY FOR STUDENTS TO PRACTICE THINKING, READING, WRITING, SPEAKING, AND LISTENING SKILLS.

Limitations of Textbooks

Content Area Textbooks

are often written above the level for which they are intended.

are often unappealing.

often teach children about many topics in a general way, but provide little opportunity for extensive study of a particular subject.

are not user-friendly. They are not written using an organization and style students readily understand.

are often out-of-date.

Benefits of Tradebooks

Tradebooks offer a variety of topics.

Teachers can more readily individualize content area reading instruction through the use of tradebooks.

Tradebooks are more appealing than textbooks.

Tradebooks allow students to study topics in greater depth.

Young and Vardell
1993

Guidelines for Adapting Scripts

1. Divide the class into groups. Give the groups time to skim the text (or other reading materials) and select the topic to dramatize.

2. Groups should choose a portion of the text that is particularly interesting and can be developed into events complicated by conflict.

3. Groups should then adapt the text and change into dialogue. Many ideas or visual elements must be expressed through spoken lines.

4. Groups should decide how to divide the parts for the readers, adding a prologue to introduce the script, and if necessary, a postscript to bring closure. They should then reread to revise the content and edit the script.

5. Scripts are held during the performance and should be uniform in size. Scripts can be bound in colorful paper or fabric for a professional look.

6. Action should be suggested rather than actively staged. Entrances and exits are also more restricted. Readers, when they are supposed to be off stage, may simply turn their backs to the audience. Readers should always avoid the "straight line" look.

7. Costumes, properties, and sets should only be suggested. A simple hat or scarf can establish a character's identity.

8. Music and sound effects can add excitement to the production.

9. Provide adequate time for the readers to rehearse their parts, and, if time allows, perform the work twice. Because this is a performance art, try to find an audience for your groups. At least make an effort to video-tape the finished product.

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Evaluation

Evaluation is based on the written script (demonstrating comprehension of the instructional materials) and on the participation in group activities and in final performance.

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